



# **CALIFORNIA**

## **Board of Psychology**



**2006/2007  
Strategic Plan**

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## Introduction

The California Board of Psychology (BOP) was established in 1958 when the first psychologists were *certified* in the state. In 1967, the Psychology Licensing Law was enacted by the Legislature which: 1) defined and protected the practice of psychology, 2) protected the title “psychologist” and 3) changed certification to licensure. It was at this time that regulatory boards shifted their primary focus to protection of the public. The BOP is one of approximately thirty regulatory entities which exist under the organizational structure of the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA). The BOP has a close and cooperative relationship with the DCA.

The BOP consists of nine members (five licensed psychologists and four public members) who may serve a maximum of two consecutive four-year terms. The Governor appoints the five licensed members and two public members. Another public member is appointed by the Senate Rules Committee, and the fourth by the Speaker of the Assembly. Public members cannot be licensed by the BOP or by any other DCA healing arts board. Board members are required to complete a Form 700 – Conflict of Interest Statement, and they are required to submit this statement to the Fair Political Practices Commission each year. Additionally, board members are required to complete ethics training every two years.

The BOP appoints an executive officer as its administrator. The executive officer serves solely in the interest of the consumers of psychological services in California as does the BOP. The executive officer oversees the board’s staff and ensures that all of its programs function efficiently and effectively.

The BOP is funded through license, application, and examination fees. The board receives no General Fund monies from the State of California.

*Licensed psychologists* may practice psychology independently. To become licensed, one must possess a doctoral degree in psychology, must have successfully completed 3,000 hours of qualifying supervised professional experience, pass the national Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP), and pass the California Psychology Supplemental Examination (CPSE). To renew a license, a psychologist must complete 36 hours of approved continuing education.

*Psychological assistants* are unlicensed individuals who are registered to a licensed psychologist or to a board certified psychiatrist as an employee to provide limited psychological services under direct supervision. Psychological assistants must possess at least a qualifying master’s degree in order to qualify for registration.

*Registered psychologists* must possess a doctoral degree which meets licensure requirements and must have completed at least 1,500 hours of qualifying supervised professional experience. Registered psychologists are permitted to function at non-profit community agencies which receive at least 25 percent of their funding from some governmental source. Registered psychologists may not function outside of this restricted and specifically defined setting.

## Mission

The California Board of Psychology protects the safety and welfare of consumers of psychological services.

## Vision

Psychological services provided to consumers meet the highest professional ethical standards. The California Board of Psychology assures the protection of consumers of psychological services through its licensing, enforcement, continuing education, and outreach programs. These programs promote efficiency and effectiveness by capitalizing on evolving technologies.

## BOP Functions

The BOP is dedicated to ensuring that psychologists provide competent and ethical psychological services to consumers. The BOP's activities fall into four broad categories.

### ***Licensing and Examination***

The BOP ensures that those entering the profession of psychology are competent to practice psychology independently and safely pursuant to section 101.6 of the California Business and Professions Code. This is achieved by requiring applicants for licensure to possess a qualifying doctorate degree from an accredited educational institution or from certain California-approved schools and by requiring the completion of a minimum of 3,000 hours of qualifying supervised professional experience. Each license applicant must also pass the national EPPP and the CPSE and take additional coursework on mandated topics.

### ***Enforcement***

The BOP's enforcement program is focused on protecting users of psychological services from exploitative, incompetent or potentially dangerous licensees or from unlicensed individuals. The BOP investigates and mediates consumer complaints. Complaints involving minor concerns may be closed with a verbal or written warning, a competency examination or an educational review. Other more serious complaints may result in disciplinary action (including reprimand, probation, suspension, or revocation) against the psychologist's license. Proven sexual misconduct with a patient results in mandatory license revocation by law. The board has the statutory authority to deny licensure or registration for various reasons including if the applicant is a registered sex offender. The board's citation and fine program and probation program provide other tools that expand enforcement options.

### ***Continuing Education***

Continued competency of licensees is assured through mandatory continuing education requirements. The law requires that licensees complete 36 hours of continuing education every two years prior to license renewal. The board's recognized accrediting agency is the California Psychological Association's (CPA) Mandatory Continuing Education Program Accrediting Agency (MCEPAA). The MCEPAA approves providers and courses pursuant to the board's regulations. Continuing education courses taken from other board-recognized entities can also be applied toward the continuing education requirements. The MCEPAA tracks units of continuing education earned by every psychologist and provides the board with monthly lists of those licensees who are deficient in the continuing education requirements. The BOP ensures compliance with required training in any specifically mandated topic areas.

***Education and Outreach***

The BOP makes information available for consumers, licensees, registrants, applicants, students, etc., through its website, brochures, press releases, on-line verification of licensure and registration, and its newsletter, the *BOP Update*. The board educates the profession on the latest regulatory and legislative changes through its website and through speaking engagements at educational institutions, professional associations and other organizations. Every publication of the board is distributed to libraries throughout the state and available for use to the public at no charge pursuant to the Library Distribution Act.

## Strategic Goals

The BOP has established six strategic goals which provide the framework for furthering its mission.

### ***Goal 1 - Enforcement***

- Ensure that negligent, incompetent, unethical or unlicensed practice of psychology is addressed through proactive, timely and consistent enforcement of the Psychology Licensing Law and the BOP's regulations.
- Effectively monitor all psychologists serving a probationary period with the board.
- Maintain a sufficient pool of qualified experts representing expertise in all areas of the practice of psychology for complaint review and expert testimony.
- Make all public enforcement information immediately and easily accessible to the public.

### ***Goal 2 - Licensing and Examinations***

- Ensure applicants meet statutory requirements for licensure and thereby are able to practice psychology competently.
- Incorporate the latest technology in administering examinations and utilize examination development and recognized validation methods.
- Collaborate with the Office of Examination Resources (OER) to ensure that the board's licensing examinations are in compliance with section 139 of the Business and Professions Code.

### ***Goal 3 - Continuing Education***

- Ensure active licensees have completed 36 hours of continuing education every license renewal period. This must include currently mandated coursework.
- Coordinate with the board's recognized accrediting agency to identify those licensees who have not complied and warn those licensees who are not in compliance. Take action to ensure compliance.
- Develop a cohesive continuing education framework and relevant guidelines.

### ***Goal 4 - Education and Outreach***

- Educate consumers to help them make informed choices about psychological services.
- Educate licensees, applicants, trainees, and other members of the public on the current information about the laws and regulations and emerging trends pertaining to the practice of psychology.
- Increase awareness of the Governor's Office and the Legislature about the problems of piecemeal and ad hoc legislation related to the continuing education of psychologists.



***Goal 5 - Regulation and Legislation***

- Ensure that the Psychology Licensing Law and the BOP's regulations are current, necessary and clear, and equitably applied to consumers, applicants, licensees and registrants.
- Monitor all legislative/regulatory proposals and ensure that all workload and fiscal issues are anticipated.

***Goal 6 - Operational Improvement***

- Increase organizational and operational efficiency and cost effectiveness including enhanced staff development activity and the use of technology.
- Cooperate with the DCA in the development and implementation of integrated information systems.
- Ensure that licensing fees are in line with the costs of agency operations.
- Improve accountability and performance review process.
- Develop a proactive approach to planning that assesses long-term changes in the environment.

## Enforcement Program

### **Goal 1 - Enforcement**

- Ensure that negligent, incompetent, unethical or unlicensed practice of psychology is addressed through proactive, timely and consistent enforcement of the Psychology Licensing Law and the BOP's regulations.
- Effectively monitor all psychologists serving a probationary period with the board.
- Maintain a sufficient pool of qualified experts representing expertise in all areas of the practice of psychology for complaint review and expert testimony.
- Make all public enforcement information immediately and easily accessible to the public.

### **Board Committee Lead Responsibility**

Enforcement Committee

### **Strategic Objectives**

- 1.01 Enhance information technology (IT) programs to include information regarding convictions for unlicensed practice. (Target Date: 01/01/07)
- 1.02 Make disciplinary documents covering the previous 10 years available for download from the board's website. (Target Date: 01/01/07)
- 1.03 Develop and implement methods to obtain restitution for consumers in appropriate cases. (Target Date: 01/01/07)
- 1.04 Enforcement staff to assume responsibility of drafting Statement of Issues documents from the Office of the Attorney General. (Target Date: 01/01/07)
- 1.05 Develop and publish a complaint process procedures manual. (Target Date: 01/01/07)
- 1.06 Add the category of "Incompetence" to section 2960 of the Business and Professions Code. (Target Date: waiting for implementation of legislation)
- 1.07 Develop and document a mentoring process that utilizes current expert reviewers to prepare psychologists beginning service as expert reviewers for the board

### **The following are examples of ongoing tasks**

- Continue to respond and resolve complaints in a timely and efficient manner.
- Use available legal remedies to address unlicensed activity.
- Assure 100 percent probationer compliance.
- Offer board expertise and participation in any training for investigators, Deputy Attorneys General and Administrative Law Judges.
- Continue to report disciplinary actions to the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB) National Data Bank and the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB).
- Update Disciplinary Guidelines.
  
- Provide licensing and enforcement information on the board's website for consumer verification.
- Develop and monitor statistics on all enforcement activities.
- Continue to train and administer the expert component of the enforcement program.

- Ensure sufficient travel expenses for unplanned, unexpected in-state or out-of-state travel required for staff for testimony in court for administrative matters.
- Continue to ensure that complainants are notified of each significant stage in the administrative process (i.e. complaint received, investigation initiated, case closure, transmittal to AG, Accusation filed, Decision rendered).
- Ensure that all active probationers are interviewed each year to confirm compliance with all terms of probation.
- Ensure that a board representative meets with new probationers within 30 days of the effective decision date to fully explain the terms of probation.
- For educational purposes, provide information to all licensees who are the subjects of closed investigations where concerns were noted.
- Continue to update expert criteria guidelines.
- Work with DCA's Legal Office, APA, CPA and ASPPB to address internet issues regarding advertisements and the provision of psychological services across state lines.
- Consider new training methods for new expert case reviewers.
- Expand information provided to the public through the use of public disclosure screens.
- Enhance the Expert Review selection process and maintain a sufficient pool of qualified experts representing expertise in all areas of the practice of psychology for complaint review and expert testimony.
- Utilize two expert reviewers in all qualify of care complaints involving one patient.
- Ensure that the Psychology Licensing Law and the BOP's regulations are current and up-to-date.

### ***Performance Measures***

- Number of victims coming forward to support ongoing cases.
- Number of repeat actions for unlicensed activities and formerly disciplined licensees/registrants.
- Website hits.
- Number of complaints filed, investigations opened, Accusations filed, Decisions rendered and citations issued.
- Survey results

## Licensing and Examination

### **Goal 2 - Licensing and Examinations**

- Ensure applicants meet statutory requirements for licensure and thereby are able to practice psychology competently.
- Incorporate the latest technology in administering examinations and utilize examination development and recognized validation methods.
- Collaborate with the Office of Examination Resources (OER) to ensure that the board's licensing examinations are in compliance with section 139 of the Business and Professions Code.

### **Board Committee(s) Lead Responsibility**

Credentials Committee  
Examination Committee

### **Strategic Objectives**

- 2.01 Publish desk manuals for Licensing Analyst positions. (Target Date: 01/01/07)
- 2.02 Accept psychological assistant and registered psychologist initial applications and renewals electronically via the Internet. (Target Date: 01/01/07)
- 2.03 Begin accepting applicant name and address changes via the board's website. (Target Date: 01/01/07)
- 2.04 Begin providing results of the EPPP via a secured location on the board's. (Target Date: 01/01/07)
- 2.05 Update the CPSE with content that is also relevant to psychologists who practice in non-mental health settings. (Target Date: 01/01/07)

### **The following are examples of ongoing tasks**

- Maximize use of Internet and other technology to provide relevant and timely information to consumers, trainees, applicants, licensees, and registrants.
- Provide timely and quality responses and information regarding:
  - applications and processing;
  - examinations;
  - license issuance; and
  - relevant records and retrieval ability; and
- Continue to enhance ATS and update the procedure manual as needed.
- Ensure that supervised professional experience requirements are relevant to the current practice of psychology.
- Develop, monitor and enhance statistics from the licensing program.
- Ensure that examination fees cover the costs of developing, purchasing, grading and administering the examinations.
- Conduct legally defensible examinations to test for minimal competency.
- Proactively communicate with psychology training programs and internships.
- Continue to provide on-line licensing/enforcement verification capability.
- Continue examination development through continued close collaboration with the DCA Office of Examination Resources (OER).
- Maintain a bank of valid questions for the CPSE .

- Continually update applications for licensure and registration.
- Enhance supervised professional experience requirements.
- Monitor computerized administration of both the EPPP and the CPSE.
- Maintain and enhance online licensing.
- Maintain manual for all historical board-approved and Legal Office interpretations of various laws and regulations concerning application processing.

***Performance Measures***

- Processing time and increased quality review.
- Efficiency in examination scheduling and license issuance.
- Number and nature of telephone calls and e-mails to the BOP from applicants and initial licensees/registrants.
- Public feedback.
- Website hits.
- Survey Results.

## Continuing Education

### **Goal 3 - Continuing Education**

- Ensure active licensees have completed 36 hours of continuing education every license renewal cycle. This must include currently mandated coursework.
- Coordinate with the board's recognized accrediting agency to identify those licensees who have not complied and warn those licensees who are not in compliance. Take action to ensure compliance.
- Develop a cohesive continuing education framework and relevant guidelines.

### **Board Committee Lead Responsibility**

Continuing Education Committee

### **Strategic Objectives**

- 3.01 Report to the Board regarding statistics on licensees who are not in compliance with the continuing education requirements. (Target Date: 08/05/06)
- 3.02 Report to the Board regarding statistics on legal/administrative action against licensees who remain out of compliance with the continuing education requirements. (Target Date: 08/05/06)

### **The following are examples of ongoing tasks**

- Identify and issue a warning to all licensees who are not in compliance with the continuing education requirements.
- Take appropriate legal/administrative action against all licensees who remain out of compliance with the continuing education requirements.
- Present to the board recommendations for a cohesive approach to continuing education.
- Update continuing education regulations as needed.
- Monitor conflict of interest issues between CPA and MCEPAA.
- Work with APA on common continuing education interests.
- Update procedure manual for Continuing Education Analyst as needed.
- Continue to provide feedback of course quality to MCEPAA.
- Ensure follow-up on all continuing education deadline notices in deficiency/warning letters.
- Warn those who are not in compliance with continuing education requirements and issue cite and fine for those who fail to come into compliance.
- Provide feedback to MCEPAA regarding performance issues.
- Consider other models of course/provider approval.
- Conduct ongoing review of the board's recognized accrediting agency.

### **Performance Measures**

- Number of continuing education deficient licensees.
- Number of consumer complaints alleging incompetence.
- Number of complaints by continuing education providers and participants.
- Website.
- Number and nature of telephone calls and e-mails to the board for general information.
- Survey Results

## Education and Outreach

### **Goal 4 - Education and Outreach**

- Educate consumers to help them make informed choices about psychological services.
- Educate licensees, applicants, trainees, and other members of the public on the current information about the laws and regulations and emerging trends pertaining to the practice of psychology.
- Increase awareness of the Governor's Office and the Legislature about the problems of piecemeal and ad hoc legislation related to the continuing education of psychologists.

### **Board Committee Lead Responsibility**

Consumer Education Committee

### **Strategic Objectives**

- 4.01 Develop a pilot program concentrating on information distribution and access to the underserved population. (Target Date: 01/01/07)

### **The following are examples of ongoing tasks**

- Identify and attend consumer health fairs.
- Notify trainees, supervisors and stakeholders educating them on the need for registration for non-licensed individuals annually at the beginning of each fiscal year.
- Develop appropriate informational materials and a plan for providing these materials to the Governor's Office staff and the Legislature.
- Enhance and continuously update the board's Internet website to disseminate BOP information and educational materials to the public.
- Continue consultation relationship with DCA Communications and Education Division.
- Publish BOP Update.
- Continue speaking engagements with educational institutions, organizations, training programs and consumer groups.
- Continue with press releases for significant enforcement developments and board events.
- Ensure that information relating to the BOP's regulation of the profession of psychology is available for use by all who may be affected by the information.
- Maintain communication with other DCA boards, professional associations and educational institutions.
- Include summaries of statutory, regulatory and policy changes in BOP Update and website.
- Proactively communicate with psychology training programs and internships.
- Continue to offer on-line licensing and enforcement verification on the board's website.
- Increase public awareness of board functions through public presentations, Internet presence and BOP Update.

- Educate the profession on the risks of practicing without complying with all the laws affecting the current practice of psychology.
- Monitor content, accuracy and relevancy of the consumer educational brochure.
- For educational purposes, provide information to all licensees who are the subjects of closed investigations where concerns were noted.
- Monitor issues of public interest and respond.
- Address human diversity issues.

***Performance Measures***

- Inquiries to verify licensure.
- Coverage of BOP cases in response to press releases.
- Repeat offenses (e.g. violation of supervision regulations).
- Trends in applicant and licensee satisfaction surveys.
- Website hits.



## Regulation and Legislation

### **Goal 5 - Regulation and Legislation**

- Ensure that the Psychology Licensing Law and the BOP's regulations are current, necessary and clear, and equitably applied to consumers, applicants, licensees and registrants.
- Monitor all legislative/regulatory proposals and ensure that all workload and fiscal issues are anticipated.

### **Board Lead Responsibility**

Legislation Committee

### **Strategic Objectives**

5.01 Follow through with Sunset Review recommendations. (Target Date: 01/01/07)

### ***The following are examples of ongoing tasks***

- Review and amend all regulations pursuant to the following six criteria:
  1. Necessity – Is there demonstrated evidence that there is a need for the regulation?
  2. Authority – Does the BOP have legislated authority to adopt the regulation?
  3. Consistency – Does the regulation conflict with other regulations or statutes?
  4. Clarity – Can the regulations be easily understood by those affected?
  5. Non-Duplicative – Do the regulations duplicate other regulations or statutes?
  6. Reference – Which statute does the regulation implement, interpret, or make specific?
- Update Disciplinary Guidelines.
- Enhance and improve supervision regulations.
- Amend regulations to improve and clarify the continuing education requirements and the requirements for supervised professional experience.
- Keep legislators informed about board's position on legislation and board regulation development which implements statutory requirements.
- Monitor relevant legislative/regulatory proposals and ensure that all workload and fiscal issues are anticipated.
- Ensure licensees continue to provide consumer information in the language spoken by their clients.

### **Performance Measures**

- Clarity in definition of the practice of psychology.
- Website hits.
- Issues raised in disciplinary proceedings.

## Operational Improvement

### ***Goal 6 - Operational Improvement***

- Increase organizational and operational efficiency and cost effectiveness including, enhanced staff development activity and the use of technology.
- Cooperate with the DCA in the development and implementation of integrated information stems.
- Ensure that licensing fees are in line with the costs of agency operations.
- Improve accountability and performance review process.
- Develop a proactive approach to planning that assesses long-term changes in the environment.

### ***Board Committee Lead Responsibility***

Executive Officer

### ***Strategic Objectives***

- 6.01 Convert to paperless record storage. (Target Date: 01/01/07)
- 6.02 Attempt to secure repayment of the loan taken from Special Fund in 2002. (Target Date: 08/01/07)

### ***The following are examples of ongoing tasks***

- Encourage staff training and development.
- Update board member and employee orientation package.
- Continue efforts to reduce costs of operations while improving performance.
- Review and evaluate budgetary documents to identify errors and potential cost-saving measures.
- Conduct periodic progress review of BOP's Strategic Plan to determine goal completion.
- Ensure equipment and technology are current.
- Amend employee duty statements and desk manuals as duties change.
- Update policy binder as needed.
- Ensure that the board's Personnel Committee provides an independent evaluation of the Executive Officer's performance annually.
- Provide staff with annual performance evaluations.
- Provide board member training as issues arise.
- Represent board at all necessary ASPPB, APA and other meetings with approval from Governor's Office.
- Send out annual reminders to all delinquent licensees.
- Review and evaluate efficiency of various DCA support services (renewal systems, cashing, information services).
- Continually update agenda mailing list.
- Continue to offer on-line information on the board's website.
- Review and evaluate billing accountability and efficiency of MBC investigations.
- Review and evaluate billing accountability and efficiency of the Office of the Attorney General.

- Review and evaluate billing accountability and efficiency of the Office of Administrative Hearings.
- Review the progress of a different component of the Strategic Plan at each quarterly meeting.
- Enhance the Consumer Affairs System (CAS) and the Applicant Tracking System (ATS).
- Utilize technology wherever efficiencies can be achieved.
- Enhance method of evaluating performance of staff.

## Commonly Used Acronyms

ABPP.....	American Board of Professional Psychology
APA.....	American Psychological Association
ATS.....	Applicant Tracking System
ASPPB.....	Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards
BCP.....	Budget Change Proposal
BOP.....	Board of Psychology
CAS.....	Consumer Affairs System
CPA.....	California Psychological Association
CPSE.....	California Psychology Supplemental Examination
CME.....	Continuing Medical Education
DCA.....	Department of Consumer Affairs
EPPP.....	Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology
HIPAA.....	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
HIPDB.....	Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank
IT.....	Information Technology
MBC.....	Medical Board of California
MCEPAA.....	Mandatory Continuing Education Program Accrediting Agency
OER.....	Office of Examination Resources